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多元社会的民主

——阿伦•李普哈特的民主理论研究

The Democracy in Plural Societies:
On Arend Lijphart's Theory about Democracy

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在传统的观念中民主被等同于多数统治。代议制的兴起表明古典民主人人轮番为治的直接民主成为历史,但是作为民主决策的基本规则,代议制民主依然坚信民主统治的合法性在于竞争中获得多数支持的一方。英国是代议制民主的发源地,威斯敏斯特宫是现代议会之母,同时也是政党政治的诞生地,两党竞争和权力集中是威斯敏斯特民主的典型特征,在这一体制下获胜的多数"胜者通吃",而少数则被排除在权力之外,因此威斯敏斯特民主又被称为多数主义民主。作为代议制民主的典范,威斯敏斯特民主自产生以来就以高效和稳定而著称,因而备受西方学者的青睐。相反,欧洲大陆国家如法国、意大利等国民主政体的低效和动荡却与威斯敏斯特民主政体形成了鲜明的对比。

20 世纪 50 年代兴起的政治文化理论以国家为单位,按照共同体中群体态度和价值取向等主观诉求的差异把当代社会划分为同质社会和多元社会。在同质社会中,多数公民对某些基本的政治问题持有大体一致的看法,表明该社会的文化是高度一致的,属于同质性文化;与之相反,多元社会则是由许多在政治态度和政治价值取向上存在严格差别和界限的群体构成的,它们往往表现为不同地域、阶层、种族、民族、宗教信仰基础上的团体,不同的群体成员间就一些基本的问题所表达的意见比较分散,对某些基本问题具有多重的、完全不同的看法,这就意味着多元社会中存在因多种主观诉求形成的亚文化群体,具有多中心的文化。以阿尔蒙德为代表的一大批主流学者通过大规模的比较研究发现,稳定的威斯敏斯特政体建立在同质社会的基础之上并且广泛地采行两党制,而欧陆的不稳民主则建立在多元社会的基础之上,其多党竞争加剧了冲突和不稳定的程度。于是,多元社会无法建立稳定的民主一度成为比较政治学和民主分类理论研究的公式。

时隔不久,20世纪的60年代,阿伦·李普哈特在研究荷兰民主政体的过程中惊讶地发现荷兰是典型的多元社会,长期以来实行多党制,但其民主政体却并没有因此而动荡不安。在质疑政治文化理论的过程中,李普哈特把研究的范围扩大到整个低地国家、斯堪的纳维亚半岛和瑞士,结果发现,这些国家几乎都是多元社会也都奉行多党制,然而政党之间通过协商、妥协和合作在分享政治权力的过程中成功地维护了整个国家民主体制的稳定。据此,李普哈特认为传统观念认为多元社会无法建立稳定民主的认识是错误的,相当数量的多元社会通过权力分

享实现政治稳定的事实至少能够说明在政治文化理论的二分类型之外还存在一种民主类型,它首次以一种"非多数主义民主"的姿态偏离了威斯敏斯特"竞争-对抗、胜者通吃"的多数主义模式,李普哈特把这一民主类型称为结盟民主。

在对结盟民主国家民主实践的比较研究中,李普哈特概括出了这一民主类型的原则性特征:大联盟政府、比例制、少数否决和局部自治。在李普哈特看来,这一发现为新兴国家尤其是那些长期被内部纷争困扰的多元社会建构稳定的民主政体提供了借鉴。通过对大量多元社会和非多元社会中结盟民主实践效果的分析,李普哈特认为多数主义民主更适合于同质社会,而多元社会则更适宜于采用结盟民主,并把这一在多元社会中推进结盟民主的设想称为结盟民主工程。

结盟民主的提出对西方政治学尤其是比较政治学和民主理论产生了重大的影响,为了回应结盟民主因太过抽象而遭致的批评,同时也为了与多数主义民主展开更加细致的比较以进一步明确多数主义民主和权力分享型民主的适用范围,李普哈特以英国的民主制度为样板建构出了十条与之相对的分属于两个不同维度的具体制度,并将后者称为共识民主。在李普哈特看来,多数主义民主模式对民主的基本定义是多数人统治的政府,而少数人充当反对派是理所当然;而共识民主的依据是"民有、民治和民享",即一个理想的民主政府其行动应当与所有公民的偏好相一致。因此,虽然多数主义民主和共识民主都承认多数人的统治优于少数人的统治,但是多数主义民主倾向于把政治权力集中到多数人手中,其它的少数则被排斥在政府权力之外;而共识民主则强调共识而非对抗,主张包容而非排斥,力求使处于统治地位的规模最大化,不满足于微弱多数。由此,李普哈特有关当代两大民主模式的二维制度设想正式形成,标志着与多数主义民主相对的权力分享型民主从抽象的原则进入到了具体的制度研究领域,结盟民主理论逐渐发展成为共识民主理论。

为了检验共识民主和多数多数主义民主的适用范围,李普哈特设置了测量"行政-政党"维度和"联邦-单一制"维度十条制度属性的指标,以此来反映某一个国家的民主体制是多数主义民主的还是共识民主的。通过对当代36个典型民主国家二维制度特征的检验,李普哈特证实了在两个维度上,36个民主国家可以被清晰地划分为多数主义的和共识民主的。这一发现修正了传统理论把民主等同于多数统治的观念:以政治文化的多元性为依据,当代社会存在两大民主模式一

一建立在同质社会基础之上的多数主义民主模式和建立在多元社会基础之上的 共识民主模式,这就意味着多数主义民主并不是唯一的典范。

现实世界中共识民主国家和多数主义民主国家的指认,为李普哈特进一步比较共识民主和多数主义民主在实践领域中的表现创造了条件。然而,民主绩效的对比考量却表明共识民主几乎在所有的领域都优于多数主义民主,这表明传统观念认为多数主义民主治理国家效果更好的假定是错误的。在这一背景下,从20世纪的90年代开始,李普哈特开始反思共识民主的绩效优于多数主义民主的原因——其根源在于共识民主所体现的民主品质要远胜过多数主义民主,这就意味着把共识民主仅仅限定在多元社会是不明智的,由于共识民主的品质胜过多数主义民主,因而更符合民主本身的要义,所以共识民主有理由扩展到传统的同质社会当中去。然而,通过对所谓"同质社会"的分析,李普哈特发现,这一概念所指涉之理想社会形式早已经成为历史了,因为当今世界,社会多元化几乎是所有国家共同面对的主题,所谓的同质社会,其多元化程度相较于多元社会来讲只不过略低一些罢了。至此,传统观念的所有假定几乎完全被推翻,而在此基础上李普哈特在理论和现实两个方面对共识民主完全替代多数主义民主模式合理性的论证则标志着他对传统观念的超越。

李普哈特的民主理论对政治学尤其是比较政治学和民主理论的发展做出了重大的贡献,结盟民主的发现推翻了传统观念中多元社会无法建立稳定民主的错误认识,为新兴国家尤其是多元社会建构稳定的民主政体提供了新的方案,同时它还重构了传统的民主类型学;共识民主继承并发展了结盟民主的基本观念并将其具体化,使权力分享型民主与多数主义民主的比较进入了具体的制度比较的领域。共识民主颠覆了民主就是多数统治的传统观念,其优秀的品质和良好的绩效为传统的多数主义民主国家和新兴的民主国家改善和巩固民主提供了有益的制度选择。而共识民主的扩展过程将成为推动 21 世纪民主化进程的"第四波"。

在半个多世纪的学术生涯中,李普哈特民主理论每一个新的进展都令许多人 欢欣鼓舞,在备受世人称道的同时,李普哈特的民主理论也面临着许多挑战。许 多批评意见都客观地指出了李普哈特民主理论的不足,如基本概念缺乏明确性、 理论建构太显随意性,假说验证和数据选择太过主观性,最终结论缺乏可靠性等 等。另外,李普哈特的民主观念存在偏差,如西方中心主义色彩十分浓厚,对一 党制民主存在偏见以及强烈的精英主义倾向等等。追根溯源,李普哈特民主理论 的许多缺陷正是由于这些深层次的观念偏差导致的。最后,李普哈特的民主理论 是典型的自由主义民主理论,这一类理论恪守精英统治、排斥公民参与的共同特 征使其始终面临合法性衰退的威胁,而李普哈特却错误地把强制投票制度看作是 解决自由主义民主合法性危机的灵丹妙药。

建设具有中国特色的社会主义民主是我国社会主义政治文明建设的重要内容,也是体现社会主义优越性的重要方面。民主已成为人类社会追求的理想价值之一,尽管资本主义民主与社会主义民主之间存在本质差别,但是民主进程和民主政体的建构应当是开放的,社会主义民主的建设并不是闭门造车。正因为如此,建设有中国特色社会主义民主必须在立足于本国国情的基础上,吸收和借鉴当今世界各国在构建民主的过程中产生的积极成果,其中,李普哈特的民主理论作为思考和探索西方民主理论与实践的最新成果之一,理当引起我们的注意,并将其合理的方面应用到推进和完善建设有中国特色社会主义民主的不同环节当中去。

关键词: 李普哈特: 多元社会: 多数主义民主: 结盟民主: 共识民主:

Abstract

The rise of representative democracy means that the classic rule of direct democracy of everyone in turn has become history, but as the basic rules of democratic decision-making, representative democracy always believed the legitimacy of democratic rule is still firmly based on support of majority in competition of different political groups. Britain is the birthplace of representative democracy, the Palace of Westminster is the mother of the modern Parliament, but also the birthplace of party politics. Competition and concentration of power between the two parties are typical of Westminster democracy, under this system The winning majority believed and practiced the rule of "winner takes all ", while the minorities were out of power. So the Westminster Democracy was also called Majoritarian Democracy. As an excellent model of representative democracy, Westminster democracy have been to known for its efficiency and stability since its birth. However, the democracy in continental European countries such as France and Italy are in stark contrast with Westminster democracy because of its inefficiency and turmoil.

The theory about political culture since 1950s and political culture divided contemporary societies into homogeneous societies and plural societies in accordance with the political attitudes and values of different groups in a community. In a homogeneous society, most citizens hold certain fundamental political issues broadly consistent with the political culture which means a kind or a part of homogeneous culture; In contrast, a plural society is formed by many groups with different political attitudes and political values mainly based on the different regions, class, race, ethnicity and religious belief. Members in these different groups express their political views about fundamental problems dispersedly, multiply and completely differently, which means that there are a variety of sub-cultural groups based on different subjective demands and formed many centers of culture in a plural society. A large number of mainstream scholars such as Almond made a large-scale comparative study and found that a stable Westminster system is based on a homogeneous society and widely adopted two-party system. But the unstable systems of democracy in European

countries are mostly built on the Plural societies and widely adopted multi-party system, which promote the competition between different plural groups and their parties and also exacerbate their level of conflict and instability. Thus, a plural society can not create a stable democracy became the formula of comparative politics and the theory about classification of democracy.

At the beginning of 1960s, Arend Lijphart was surprised to find that the Netherlands had already been a typical plural society with multi-party system for a long time, but its democracy was not therefore unstable. In order to explain this paradox in the theory of political culture, Liphart extended his study realm to the entire Low Countries, Scandinavia and Switzerland, found that almost all of these countries were plural societies and also pursued multi-party system, However, these parities succeeded in maintaining the stability of democratic institutions throughout their countries through a kind of political mechanism of consultation, compromise and sharing of power among different political parties. Accordingly, Lijphart claimed the traditional wisdom believing any kind of stable democratic systems can not be built on the plural society is wrong. The reality that a considerable number of plural society achieved political stability through a kind of power-sharing system at least should be able to explain the fact that there must be an additional type of democracy based on the classification of political culture. It was the first time a kind of "non-majoritarian democracy" deviated from the model of "winner takes all" and system of competition. Lijphart called this new kind of democracy "Consociational Democracy".

In the comparative study of consociational democratic societies, Lijphart summarized the characteristics of consociational democracy: grand coalition, proportional system, minority veto, and local autonomy. According to Lijphart's view, this discovery provides a reference for emerging countries, especially those plural societies that have long been troubled by internal strife to build stable democracy. Through a large number of comparison about the effect of different democratic models between non-plural society and plural society, Lijphart pointed that majoritarian democracy is more suitable for homogeneous society and plural society

is more suitable for the consociational democracy, and also supposed a project to build and promote consociational democracy in almost all of plural societies.

The proportion of consociational democracy exerted a significant impact to the Western politics especially to the comparative politics and theory about democracy. In order to response to the criticism of consociational democracy for being too abstract, and also in order to further a more detailed comparison between consociational democracy and majoritarian democracy to find the reasonable and practical scope of consociational democracy, Lijphart built a kind of democratic system with ten concrete institutions belonging to different latitudes which was called consensus democracy opposed to the British model and its ten concrete institutions. In Lijphart's view, the definition of democracy in majoritarian democracy is a government ruled by the majority, the minority is taken for granted as the opposition; but the definition of democracy in consensus democracy is based on a kind of government "of the people, by the people and for the people" which means an ideal democratic government and its actions should be consistent with the preferences of all citizens. Thus, while majoritarian democracy and consensus democracy and the rule of the majority have already been recognized to be better than minority rule, but most of majoritarian democracy tend to concentrate political power in the hands of the majority and exclude the minorities from the authority of government, while consensus democracy emphasized consensus rather than confrontation, advocated tolerance rather than rejection and strived to maximize the size of the dominant including any kind of weak majorities. As a result, Liphart's assumption of two contemporary democratic model with two-dimensional concrete institutions was officially formed, which marked the study about the abstract principles of power-sharing democracy contrast with majoritarian democracy was pushed into the field of concrete institutions. The theory of consociational democracy was gradually enriched and developed into the consensus democracy.

In order to test the practical scope of consensus democracy and majoritarian democracy, Lijphart set many indexes to measure ten concrete institutions of two democratic models in "administrative - political parties" latitude and "Federation -

Unitary "latitude to reflect that a country's democratic system is a majoritarian democracy or consensus democracy. Through the test on the characters of ten institutions in two latitudes of 36 typical democratic countries at contemporary, Lijphart confirmed that 36 democratic countries can clearly be classified as majoritarian and consensus democracy. This discovery modified the traditional theory that equaled democracy as the rule of the majority and revealed that there should be two kinds of fundamental democratic models: one is majoritarian democracy based on the homogeneous political culture, another is consensus democracy built on the plural political culture, which means that majoritarian democracy is not the only model of modern democracy.

The identification of majoritarian democracy and consensus democracy in the real world created conditions for Lijphart to further comparison about the performance in practice of consensus democracy and majoritarian democracy. However, different performance of two democratic models revealed that performance of consensus democracy in almost all areas are better than majoritarian democracy, which showed traditional wisdom that majoritarian democracy is the best in government is wrong. In this context, from the 1990s on Lijphart began to reflect the reason why the performance of consensus democracy is better. Gradually he found the most reason is the quality of consensus democracy is far better than majoritarian democracy, which means the consensus democracy should not only be limited in the plural society. Because the quality of democracy is better than the majoritarian deomocracy and more in line with the essence of the democracy, it is reasonable to extend the consensus democracy to the traditional homogeneous society. But during the analysis of so-called "homogeneous society" of which Lijphart found the social reality it reflected had already become obsolete. Because the social diversity is prevalent in almost all of the countries today. The so-called homogeneous societies just sign a kind of relatively lower cultural diversity. In essence they are really plural society at present. At this point, almost all of the traditional assumptions about democracy and plural society were completely overturned, and this is also a standard for Lijphart because his proof that the majortarian democracy should be replaced by the consensus democracy is a great transcendence to the traditional theory.

Lijpart's theory about democracy made a significant contribution to the politics especially to the development of comparative politics and the theory of democracy. The consociational democracy overthrew the incorrect wisdom that any kind of stable democracy can no be built in a plural society, offered a new program for those plural societies to build the stable democratic system hile also reconstructed the traditional typology of democracy. The consensus democracy inherited and developed also specified the basic concepts of consociational democracy, which also promoted the comparison between power-sharing democracy and majoritarian democracy into the comparison among specific and concrete institutions. The theory of consensus democracy subverted the traditional wisdom that equaled democracy as the rule of majority, and its excellent quality and good performance also provided a useful institutional choice for the traditional majoritarian democracies and those countries in the democratization to improve and consolidate their democracies. According to Lijphart's view, the expansion of consensus democracy will be the "fourth wave" of democratization in the 21st century.

In the past half a century, many people rejoiced and praised for Lijphart's progress on the theory about democracy. But at the same time, many people pointed the limitation in Lijphart's theory and challenged him about his view. They criticized that the key concepts were slur and theoretical construction was too arbitrary, hypothesis and data selection were too subjective, the final conclusions were unreliable and so on. In addition, there are some deviations in Lijphart's concepts of theory about democracy: his theoretical trend of Western-centrism is very strong; he focused on the one-party system and leaned to the political elites excessively. Tracing the source the deficiencies in Lijphart's theory were caused by these deep-seated biases. Finally, Lijphart's theory about democracy including consociational democracy and consensus democracy is a typical kind of liberal democracy. The liberal democracy seriously abides by the rule of elite and excludes political participation of common citizens, which caused the recession of legality of liberal

democracy. But Liphart believed incorrectly that the compulsory voting system is a

panacea to the crisis of liberal democracy's crisis.

The socialist democracy with Chinese characteristics which reflects an important

aspect of the superiority of socialism is an important part of Chinese socialist political

civilization. Since the 18th century, the democracy has become one of the ideal value

of human society. While there is an essential difference between capitalist democracy

and socialist democracy, but the democratic process and the construction of

democracy should be open, and also the socialist democracy cannot be built behind

closed doors. So the building of socialist democracy with Chinese characteristics must

firstly be based on the national circumstances, but it also must absorb and learn the

positive results during the process of building democracy from any other countries in

the world. Lijphart's theory on democracy represents the latest achievements of

Western democratic theory and its practice. It certainly should arouse our attention

and put its positive aspects into the process of promoting and improving the socialist

democracy with Chinese characteristics.

Key words: Lijphart; Plural Society; Majoritarian Democracy;

Consociational Democracy; Consensus Democracy;

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